

REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

CLAIM STATUS

Claims 8-12 and 15-22 are pending and are rejected. Claims 8, 15-17 and 20 being independent in form. Claim 22 is herein amended. No new matter has been added by this amendment.

Objection to Specification

The title has been deemed not descriptive and the abstract has been objected to as not containing proper language and format. (See paragraphs 3-4 of the Office Action) Applicant accordingly submits an amended Title and Abstract. Applicants previously submitted the amended Title and Abstract as presented herein in the Amendment filed on October 17, 2003. Such Amendment, however, was deemed non-compliant because it did not include a listing of all claims. A response to the Notice of Non-compliant Amendment was filed on November 10, 2003, in which only the non-compliant portion (i.e., the claim listing) was resubmitted in compliant form. The Office Action indicates that it is issued in response to the paper filed on November 10, 2003 (Paper NO. 7). However, it is not clear whether the Title and Abstract amendments presented in the October 17 filing were entered and considered, although such does not appear to be the case. As such, as Applicants believe the previously submitted amended Title and Abstract satisfy the stated objections, such are again presented here for consideration by the Examiner.

Applicants respectfully submit that these objections are overcome by the amended Title and Abstract presented herein and request that these objections be withdrawn. Should such amendments be deemed to not overcome the objections, Applicants will further respond upon being so-advised by the Examiner.

Claim Objection

Claim 22 has been objected to for an identified informality. (See paragraph 6 of the Office Action.) Claim 22 has been amended as suggested by the Examiner. Applicant respectfully requests that this objection be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and 103

Claims 8-12, 15-17 and 20-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by USP 6,360,254 to Linden et al. ("Linden") (see paragraphs 7-16 of the Office Action) and claims 18-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Linden in view of U.S. Patent No. 56,134,584 to Chang et al. ("Chang"). (see paragraphs 17-19 of the Office Action)

In rejecting the pending claims, the Examiner has taken the position that Linden discloses each limitation of claims 8-12, 15-17 and 20-22 (which include independent claims 8, 15-17 and 20) and, in combination with Chang, renders dependent claims 18 and 19 obvious. Applicant respectfully submits that such reference is not available against this application, rendering the rejection improper.

This application is a divisional of US application serial No. 09/025,184 filed February 18, 1998, now USP 6,101,526, and claims priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 to Japanese application JP 9-035129 filed on February 19, 1997.

The cited reference to Linden was filed on March 30, 1999.

Accordingly, Linden is not available as prior art against this application and Applicants respectfully submit that all claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§102(e) and 103 based on Linden are thus improper and respectfully request that they be withdrawn. A certified translation of the Japanese priority application is provided herewith.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the invention as recited in the pending claims is neither taught or suggested by, and thus neither anticipated by nor rendered obvious in view of, the available prior art, taken alone or in combination, and is patently distinct from the art of record and therefore allowable.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, Applicants submit that the application is hereby placed in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested.

Applicants believe no fee nor extension of time is required for this filing. However, should an extension of time be necessary to render this filing timely, such extension is hereby petitioned and the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for this paper, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1232-4423US1.

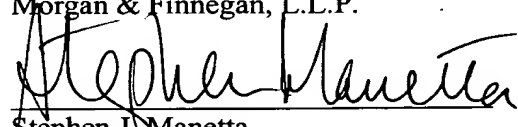
In the event that a telephone conference would facilitate prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number provided.

Dated: April 28, 2004

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS:
MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.
345 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10154-0053
(212) 758-4800 (Telephone)
(212) 751-6849 (Telecopier)

Respectfully submitted,
Morgan & Finnegan, L.L.P.

By:


Stephen J. Manetta
Reg. No. 40,426